

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 to 71: (Canceled).

Claim 72 (Currently amended): Holding device (1) with a holding container (2) for a holding vessel, ~~in particular a blood sample collecting tube~~, wherein the holding container (2) surrounds a holding chamber (7) with a container wall (6), and in the direction of a longitudinal axis (8) comprises a proximal and a distal end (9, 10) spaced apart from one another, whereby the container wall (6) is delimited by an inner surface (11) facing the holding chamber (7) and an outer surface (12) facing away therefrom, with a needle holder (4) for a needle arrangement (14) which can be secured thereon, ~~in particular a double-ended cannula needle (5)~~, whereby the needle holder (4) in the holding chamber (7) of the holding container (2) is designed to be displaceable relative to the ~~latter~~ holding container from a position of use in the region of the proximal end (9) to a disposal position in the direction of the distal end (10), with a first adjusting device (15) for the needle holder (4) for the displacement from the position use into the disposal position, with a cover element (3) for the needle arrangement (14)

securable to the needle holder (4) in the disposal position of the needle holder (4) and with a releasable locking device (16), wherein the cover element (3) is formed by a disc-shaped main body (21) aligned in a plane (20) perpendicular to the longitudinal axis (8), whereby the cover element (3) in the position of use of the needle holder (4) is arranged adjacent thereto on the side pointing away from the proximal end (9) in the holding chamber (7), and in that the releasable locking device (16) is arranged between the cover element (3) and the holding container (2), with which the cover element (3) in the position of use of the needle holder (4) is held relative to the holding container (2), and ~~in that~~ wherein between the needle holder (4) and the cover element (3) an additional adjusting device (17) is arranged formed by an elastically deformable spring element (19), ~~in particular a compression spring~~, whereby on releasing the locking device (16) the cover element (3) is displaced relative to the needle holder (4) in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8) by the additional adjusting device (17) in the direction of the distal end (10) of the holding container (2).

Claim 73 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the first adjusting device (15) is in the form

of ~~an elastically deformable spring element (10), in particular a~~
compression spring.

Claim 74 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the additional adjusting device (17) is designed to expand conically from the needle holder (4) up to the cover element (3).

Claim 75 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the first and the additional adjusting device (15, 17) are in the form of a one-piece component.

Claim 76 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the disc-shaped main body (21) of the cover element (3) has an external diameter (30) in the plane (20) perpendicular to the longitudinal axis (8), which corresponds approximately to an inner diameter (31) of the holding chamber (7) in the same plane (20) ~~or is only slightly smaller.~~

Claim 77 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the cover element (3) in the region of the longitudinal axis (8) has an opening (22) for feeding through a portion of the cannula (5).

Claim 78 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 77, wherein in the region of the opening (22) a component (23) is arranged for suctioning or absorbing liquid.

Claim 79 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the locking device (16) comprises at least ~~one~~, preferably two, diametrically opposite locking elements (25) and locking recesses (26) cooperating therewith.

Claim 80 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 79, wherein the locking ~~element or~~ elements (25) are arranged on the disc-shaped main body (21) of the cover element (3).

Claim 81 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein on the main body (21) of the cover element (3), several, ~~preferably four~~, locking elements (25) are arranged distributed evenly around the circumference and in the holding container (2) several, ~~preferably two~~, diametrically opposite locking recesses (26) are arranged to form the locking device (16).

Claim 82 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 79, wherein the locking recesses (26) are arranged in the container wall (6) of the holding container (2).

Claim 83 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 79, wherein the locking recesses (26) penetrate the container wall (6) of the holding container (2).

Claim 84 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 79, wherein the locking ~~element or~~ elements (25) project in radial direction, from the inner surface (11) to the outer surface (12) of the container wall (6), only partially into the locking recesses (26).

Claim 85 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 79, wherein the locking ~~element or~~ elements (25) ~~is or~~ are spring-connected to the disc-shaped main body (21) of the cover element (3).

Claim 86 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 79, wherein the locking ~~element or~~ elements (25) ~~is or~~ are arranged on a holding arm (57) projecting from the main body (21) of the cover element (3) in the direction of the needle holder (4) or the proximal end (9).

Claim 87 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 79, wherein the locking ~~element or~~ elements (25) ~~is or~~ are arranged in the region of the outer circumference of the cover element (3).

Claim 88 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein on the region of the main body (21) facing the proximal end (9) at least one first ~~centring~~ centering element (51) for the additional adjusting device (17) is arranged.

Claim 89 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein between the cover element (3) and the inner surface (11) of the container wall (6) at least one first guiding arrangement (27) is provided, which is aligned in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8) of the holding container (2).

Claim 90 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 89, wherein the guiding arrangement (27) extends at least over the entire displacement path (58) of the cover element (3) between its maintenance position in the region of the proximal end (9) and its cover position in the region of the distal end (10).

Claim 91 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 89, wherein the first guiding arrangement (27) is formed by at least one guiding groove (28) indented in the container wall (6) and running in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8) and at least one guiding extension (29) on the cover element (3) engaging with the guiding groove (28).

Claim 92 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 91, wherein several guiding grooves (28) are arranged evenly distributed around the circumference of the holding container (2).

Claim 93 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 91, wherein a groove base of the guiding groove (28) over its longitudinal extension relative to the longitudinal axis (8) runs parallel to the ~~latter~~ the longitudinal axis.

Claim 94 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the diametrically opposite locking devices (16) viewed in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8) are arranged around the circumference of the holding container (2) symmetrically between the guiding grooves (28).

Claim 95 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein between the holding container (2) and the cover element (3) a further guiding arrangement (52) is provided.

Claim 96 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein in order to form at least one part of a guiding arrangement (27, 52) a partial section (53, 54) of the inner surface (11) of the container wall (6) is designed as a guide track (55, 56) and is aligned over its longitudinal extension relative to the longitudinal axis (8) in parallel to the ~~latter~~ the longitudinal axis.

Claim 97 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 96, wherein the partial section (53, 54) of the inner surface (11) or the inner surface (11) is designed to be cylindrical relative to the longitudinal axis (8).

Claim 98 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 89, wherein the first guiding arrangement (27) is formed by the bearing or cooperation of the locking element (25) on the guide track (55) arranged on the holding arm (57).

Claim 99 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 98, wherein the locking element or elements (25) lie

with a predeterminable bearing force aligned radially in the direction of the guide track (55).

Claim 100 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 99, wherein the bearing force is almost equal over the entire displacement path (58) of the cover element (3).

Claim 101 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 95, wherein the additional guiding arrangement (52) in the region of the holding container (2) comprises at least one guide element (59), ~~such as a web, a rib,~~ arranged on the inner surface (11) thereof and projecting in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8) and projecting over the inner surface (11).

Claim 102 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 101, wherein the guide element or elements (59) is or are aligned in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8).

Claim 103 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 101, wherein two guide elements (59) arranged next to one another around the circumference form a portion of the additional guiding arrangement (52).

Claim 104 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 103, wherein several guide elements (59) are provided, distributed evenly in pairs around the circumference, ~~in particular arranged in the form of a cross.~~

Claim 105 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 95, wherein the additional guiding arrangement (52) comprises at least one further guide track (56) which is arranged between the two adjacently arranged guide elements (59).

Claim 106 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 95, wherein the additional guiding arrangement (52) in the region of the needle holder (4) comprises at least one guide extension (60) cooperating with the guide element or elements (59).

Claim 107 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 106, wherein the guide extension or extensions (60) is or are arranged respectively between the two adjacent guide elements (59).

Claim 108 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the first and the additional guide tracks (55, 56) arranged in the form of a cross relative to one another

are offset relative to one another in circumferential direction by 90°.

Claim 109 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein at least one guide element (59) projects into at least one partial section (62) formed in the circumferential region of the cover element (3) or is in engagement with the ~~latter~~ cover element.

Claim 110 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the container wall (6) in the plane (20) aligned perpendicular to the longitudinal axis (8) has a circular cross section, and an external diameter (30) of the disc-shaped main body (21) corresponds approximately to an inner diameter (31) of the holding chamber (7) in this plane ~~or is slightly smaller than the latter~~.

Claim 111 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the holding container (2) is designed to be open in the region of the distal end (10) and closed in the region of the proximal end (9) partially by an end wall (13).

Claim 112 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 111, wherein the end wall (13) has an opening (32) in

the region of the longitudinal axis (8) which corresponds in its inner cross sectional dimension (33) approximately to an outer cross sectional dimension (34) of the needle holder (4).

Claim 113 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 111, wherein in the end wall (13) there is a holding chamber (35) for the first adjusting device (15) or the one-piece component formed by the adjusting devices (15, 17).

Claim 114 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the needle holder (4) is formed by a roughly sleeve-shaped supporting body (36).

Claim 115 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 114, wherein on the sleeve-shaped supporting body (36) in the plane (20) aligned perpendicular to the longitudinal axis (8) at least one support element (37) projecting radially outwards over the carrier body is arranged.

Claim 116 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 115, wherein on the support element (37) the adjusting devices (15, 17) are supported at the end regions facing one another.

Claim 117 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 116, wherein at least one of the end regions is secured firmly to the support element (37).

Claim 118 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 115, wherein the support element (37) in a one piece design of the adjusting device (15, 17) is arranged in a transition region thereof and is secured thereto.

Claim 119 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 115, wherein the support element (37) is designed as a support element (48) running around the circumference and projecting over the supporting body (36) radially.

Claim 120 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 114, wherein on the region of the support element (48) facing the proximal end (9) at least one first ~~centring~~ centering element (49) is arranged.

Claim 121 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 114, wherein in the region of the needle holder (4) facing the distal end (10) a tubular depression (49) is arranged in the sleeve-shaped supporting body (36).

Claim 122 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 114, wherein in the sleeve-shaped supporting body (36) a thread arrangement (43) is provided for the needle arrangement (14).

Claim 123 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 122, wherein the thread arrangement (43) is aligned in such a way, that with an opposite arrangement and horizontal alignment of the releasable locking device (16) for the cover element (3) a tapering (45) on a cannula tip (44) is provided on an upper side of the cannula (5).

Claim 124 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein between the needle holder (4) and the holding container (2) an anti-rotational means (38) is arranged, which in the position of use of the needle holder (4) is in engagement and prevents a relative pivoting or rotation between the ~~latter~~ needle holder about the longitudinal axis (8).

Claim 125 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the cover element (3) with the needle holder (4) located in the disposal position is secured in the region of the distal end (10) relative to the holding container (2) in its

longitudinal movement in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8) by means of a locking device (39).

Claim 126 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 125, wherein the locking device (39) comprises at least one retaining element (40) arranged on the holding container (2) and facing the distal end (10) and at least one locking element (41) cooperating therewith on the cover element (3).

Claim 127 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 125, wherein the retaining element (40) is formed by a spring element of the container wall (6), which is designed at least over a portion of its longitudinal extension in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8) to project over the inner surface (11) in the direction of the longitudinal axis (8).

Claim 128 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 125, wherein the retaining element or elements (40) are arranged in the region of the guiding arrangement (27), ~~in particular in the guiding groove (28).~~

Claim 129 (Previously presented): Holding device according to 124, wherein the locking device (39) comprises at least one

stop element (42) for the cover element (3) arranged on the holding container (2) and facing the distal end (10).

Claim 130 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 129, wherein the stop element or elements (42) are arranged in the region of the guiding arrangement (27), ~~in particular in the guiding groove (28).~~

Claim 131 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein in the region of the distal end (10) of the holding container (2) ~~on the latter~~ at least one securing element (46) is arranged on the holding container.

Claim 132 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 131, wherein the securing element (46) is inserted into the holding container (7) and is locked onto the holding container (2).

Claim 133 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 131, wherein the securing element (46) comprises a sleeve-shaped support element (63) and a flange-shaped step (64) connected therewith, which projects over the support element (63) in the direction away from the longitudinal axis (8).

Claim 134 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 131, wherein on the sleeve-shaped support element (63) at least one positioning element (66) aligned in parallel direction to the longitudinal axis (8) is arranged, which projects over the support element (63) in the direction of the proximal end (9).

Claim 135 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 134, wherein several, ~~preferably four~~ positioning elements (66) are provided distributed evenly around the circumference, ~~in particular arranged in the form of a cross relative to one another.~~

Claim 136 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the positioning element (66) projects into the additional guide track (56) arranged between the two adjacent guide elements (59).

Claim 137 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein in the disposal position the guide extension (60) of the needle holder (4) is supported at the end of the positioning element (66) facing the proximal end (9).

Claim 138 (Currently amended): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the locking device (39) comprises at least one retaining element (69) arranged on the securing element (46) and closer to the proximal end (9) and at least one locking element (25) on the cover element (3) interacting therewith, ~~in particular the locking element (25) arranged on the holding arm (57).~~

Claim 139 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein the locking device (39) also comprises at least one stop element (68) for the cover element (3) arranged on the securing element (46) and facing the distal end (10).

Claim 140 (Previously presented): Holding device according to claim 72, wherein in the disposal position an anti-rotational means (72) is in engagement between the securing element (46) and the cover element (3).